

15 August 2022

Report of	Assistant Director of Place and Client Services	Author	Karen Syrett ☎ 506477
Title	Infrastructure Audit		
Wards affected	All wards		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The previous Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing, Councillor Andrew Ellis, asked that an infrastructure audit be undertaken for the borough. It was important that the timing of this reflected local plan production and it was agreed to hold off until the Local Plan was adopted.
- 1.2 The Local Plan was adopted in July and it is therefore considered appropriate to undertake the audit to gain an insight as to what infrastructure exists and where there are deficiencies. This will help inform the next review of the Local Plan.
- 1.3 Local Plan Committee are asked to agree the stages and content of the audit.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 The Committee are asked to agree the methodology for undertaking the Infrastructure Audit.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 To inform the preparation of the Infrastructure Audit.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Not to proceed with the Infrastructure Audit; to work to a different timescale, ie delay production or to revise the methodology.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 The provision of infrastructure and the believe that it is not keeping up with new residential development is a common concern amongst those engaged in the planning process, both at a plan and application level. In recognition of this, the previous Portfolio Holder, Councillor Andrew Ellis, asked the team to undertake an Infrastructure Audit. Now the Local Plan has been adopted it is appropriate to consider if this work should now be undertaken. It will help inform any review of the Local Plan.
- 5.2 The importance of infrastructure is highlighted in national planning policy and guidance and consequently any audit of infrastructure will need to meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. The National Planning Policy Framework states that strategic policies should make provision for a range of infrastructure, and that policy makers should engage with infrastructure providers.
- 5.3 The NPPF requires that strategic policies in plans should make sufficient provision for infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat) and community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure). Infrastructure providers are identified as relevant bodies in the NPPF. Effective and on-going joint working between strategic policy-making authorities and relevant bodies is integral to the production of a positively prepared and justified strategy. The provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level can also be addressed by non-strategic policies. Infrastructure planning also forms an important means for local planning authorities to maintain effective cooperation under the duty to cooperate with each other, and with other prescribed bodies.
- 5.4 The NPPF highlights how the preparation and review of all policies should be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. The Infrastructure Audit will be an important part of this approach. Infrastructure has a key influence on the supply and delivery of new homes, business investment and expansion, healthy and inclusive communities, sustainable transport, communications, and planning for climate change and resilience. In summary national policy clearly states that it is the responsibility of local planning authorities to plan positively for the provision of infrastructure.
- 5.5 The term “infrastructure” includes a number of components. The Audit could address all or some of the following eight broad categories:
- Transport;
 - Utilities;
 - Education;
 - Health;
 - Waste;
 - Blue and Green Infrastructure;
 - Community Facilities; and
 - Emergency Services.
- 5.6 Within these broad categories are numerous sub-components and this project will involve working with many agencies. Some categories, such as open space and community facilities, the Council will have greater knowledge of. Others such as education and transport, including active travel, officers will work with colleagues at ECC to inform the outputs. Other categories will require more work and relationship building.

- 5.7 The Audit is intended to be a living document which will initially contain information gathered in Autumn 2022. Phase 1 will aim to set out what infrastructure exists and where it is located. It is intended that this will be done by officers in house, reviewing documents that already exist and contacting service providers where necessary. Existing documentation includes;
- [EBC 5.1 Background Paper Public Health and Planning evidence March 2017](#)
 - [EBC 5.2 Colchester CIL Report 2015 Update](#)
 - [EBC 5.3 Colchester Infrastructure Development Plan Final Report 02.06.17](#)
 - [EBC 5.4 Colchester Local Plan Modelling Support Transport Planning Final Report April 2016](#)
 - [EBC 5.5 Colchester Local Plan Traffic Modelling Report 1 July 2017](#)
 - [EBC 5.6 Colchester Local Plan Traffic Modelling Technical Note July 2016 Version Two](#)
 - [EBC 5.7 Colchester Rapid Transit Report Strategic Outline Business Case September 2016](#)
 - [EBC 5.8 Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy June 2015](#)
 - [EBC 5.11 Playing Pitch Strategy and Action plan June 2015](#)
 - [EBC 5.12 Travel to Work Patterns Report 2015](#)
 - [EBC 5.13 Colchester Infrastructure Delivery Plan](#)
 - [EBC 6.1 Colchester Economic Viability Study June 2017](#)
 - [EBC 4.62 Colchester Town Centre Surface Water Management Plan](#)
 - [EBC 4.63 Colchester Surface Water Management Plan Action Plan 2018 Update](#)
 - [EBC 4.64 Colchester Surface Water Management Plan – Maps](#)
 - [EBC 4.65 Langham Position Statement](#)
 - Water Resources Management Plan 2015 – 2020
 - Greater Essex Growth and Infrastructure Framework 2016 – 2036 [Greater Essex Growth and Infrastructure Framework 2016-2036 – Essex Open Data](#)
- 5.8 The second stage of the work will seek to identify where there are already infrastructure deficits. This will be based on information and evidence from providers, rather than perceptions. It will then aim to provide the most accurate picture of infrastructure requirements and where possible the costs, at this point in time, to address those deficits.
- 5.9 The third stage will identify if there are areas in the borough where infrastructure deficits exist that will need to be addressed prior to any future development taking place and this may affect land values. There may even be deficits that cannot be remedied. This may mean that when the next Local Plan is produced certain areas are not considered for future growth.
- 5.10 A range of evidence will be used to support the Audit, primarily through a review of previous studies, existing sources of data and information, and further dialogue with key agencies and infrastructure providers.
- 5.11 A wide range of lead agencies will be involved in the planning and delivery of future infrastructure. The Audit will initially only identify a list of existing infrastructure and a list of infrastructure projects that are needed to address existing deficiencies. This is important in its own right as it will assist the Council and other stakeholders to understand and prioritise allocation of resources, prepare related service delivery and investment plans and support future bids for funding.
- 5.12 The information in the Audit will need to be monitored, reviewed and updated as necessary through the process of reviewing the Local Plan. Additional infrastructure not

identified in the Audit may be required to enable development as a result of potential changes to plans/strategies or priorities provided by infrastructure providers.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the Local Plan and is available to view on our website.

<https://cbccrmdata.blob.core.windows.net/noteattachment/Equality%20Impact%20Assessment%20June%202017.pdf>

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 The Strategic Plan is relevant, in particular in contributing towards priorities under the themes:

- Delivering homes for people who need them;
- Growing a fair economy so everyone benefits; and
- Creating safe, healthy and active communities.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 N/A

9. Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 The Infrastructure Audit will collect publicly available information and is unlikely to generate publicity.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1 The Audit is expected to cost in the region of £50,000.

11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 N/A

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 N/A

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 N/A

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 14.1 The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and has committed to being carbon neutral by 2030. The NPPF sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. This involves meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Infrastructure is an important component in meeting the economic, social and environmental objectives of sustainable development and reflecting the character, needs and opportunities of an area.